School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

Graduate Student Handbook 2025 - 2026

University of **PITTSBURGH**

Health Sciences
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

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Introduction

The Dean, faculty and staff all join in welcoming you to the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) at the University of Pittsburgh. We are pleased that you have chosen SHRS to pursue your advanced educational goals.

This handbook was developed to make you aware of the SHRS policies and procedures that may differ from the general University of Pittsburgh policies. These policies must be followed while you are a student at SHRS. Therefore, we ask that you read this handbook thoroughly.

- You are also required to review the **Graduate Catalogs** for the University and SHRS which can be found here for the current academic year. (Choose the dropdown for the graduate handbook)
- **Your department may also have a handbook pertaining to your degree that you are required to review.**
- Information for current students can also be found on the SHRS Student Resource Hub

Information in the SHRS handbook is subject to change.

Check the digital screens and your Pitt email account frequently for important announcements and information. If you have any questions, contact your department or Student Services.

About SHRS

More information on the SHRS Vision, Mission and Values can be found on the SHRS website at this link: About | University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences.

SHRS Directory

Our directory of the University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) provides a comprehensive listing of people, offices, labs and centers dedicated to advancing education, research and clinical practice in health sciences. Whether you're looking to connect with academic departments, administrative offices or research units, you'll find the essential contact information and key personnel to assist you in exploring the breadth of SHRS' innovative programs and services.

- Welcome
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Philosophy of Graduate Education

The faculty of SHRS believes that one of its major responsibilities in graduate education is to broaden and deepen awareness among all students in the health professions of best practices in maintaining high standards of scholarship, and to foster recognition of scholarship's critical relevance to clinical practice and technological advances designed to promote human health.

SHRS graduate programs provide in-depth training in substantive areas within a student's chosen profession. They aim to foster critical thinking through a variety of scholarly and creative activities, thereby creating an atmosphere of scientific inquiry. These substantive areas include knowledge of the scientific basis for the development of advanced clinical expertise within the professions represented in the school. An equally important function is to encourage health professionals to be sensitive to the needs of the human beings they are serving, and to adapt their methods to the changing social, economic, and technological environments in which they practice. Accordingly, these professionals should develop the ability to perform newly emerging and expanding roles of advanced clinical services, research, teaching and administration in the health care systems, advancing the frontiers of their particular field of expertise.

On the assumption that the accumulation and mastery of basic factual knowledge have been accomplished prior to enrollment in graduate study, SHRS graduate education focuses on synthesis and integration, in order to allow for new systemic insights into the application and extension of that knowledge. Furthermore, the linkage of various educational experiences with research projects as part of SHRS graduate programs is designed to enhance problem-solving skills. Through interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary didactic, clinical and research experiences, individual professional identity is fostered, while the ability to function both independently and in collaboration with colleagues from other disciplines is enhanced.

Office of the Provost Policies and Guidelines

The Office of the Provost provides a general oversight of academic affairs, including education, faculty, and student life. Policies and guidelines can be found at: www.provost.pitt.edu

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The University Notice of Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy can be found here.

SHRS Environment

Our school is committed to action-oriented and evidence-based approaches to maximize health and rehabilitation outcomes for everyone and to create the most welcoming, engaging, enriching, and accessible space possible for our students, faculty, staff, and friends in the community.

We believe health and rehabilitation problems often require complex solutions, and we are dedicated to developing and implementing those solutions through our research, service, and the education of the next generation of leaders in our professions.

Disability Etiquette Guide

The Disability Etiquette Guide provides useful and practical information to consider when communicating about disabilities and/or with people with disabilities.

SHRS Policies and Procedures for Graduate Students

Student Roles and Responsibilities

The University has a number of official policies affecting students. For complete and current text on all University policies, please go to Policies & Guidelines | Office of the Provost | University of Pittsburgh.

All SHRS rules, polices and regulations outlined in this handbook apply to SHRS students enrolled in residential, online or hybrid programs.

SHRS Expectations for Appearance

In the interest of personal safety and consideration for others, it is the policy of SHRS that students adhere to some basic standards of dress and grooming while attending classes and clinical assignments:

- Wear appropriate footwear that meets the expectations for the setting you are in.
- Dress modestly (no inappropriate skin exposure, no exposed undergarments).
- Minimize body odors (e.g., excessive smoke).
- Avoid wearing excessive fragrances (e.g., perfume, cologne).
- Maintain personal hygiene.

Students need to adhere to any dress codes and policies specific to any clinical sites in which the student practices.

Online students are also required to maintain a professional online appearance while interacting on camera, be mindful of your location and what appears behind and around you and considerate of any background noises.

Exceptions to this policy may be made based on verified medical, religious, or cultural concerns. In addition, students are expected to abide by any dress code policy established by their program or department. Students in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

SHRS Impaired Student Policy

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) has the responsibility to educate students to be responsible professionals prepared to provide quality services. Whether in the classroom, the clinical setting, or a research setting, students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors aligned with their professions' respective Scopes of Practice, Codes of Ethics, and Technical Standards.

Please click here to read the entire SHRS Impaired Student Policy.

SHRS Social Media Policy

Social media is rapidly expanding, and new outlets are created every day. Professional organizations and ethical codes are often outdated given the rapid expansion of social

media. It is essential that students and faculty remain aware and vigilant regarding the social media ethical challenges facing health professionals, clients, patients, and students.

Please click here to read the entire SHRS Social Media Policy.

University and SHRS Rules and Regulations

- Students should understand and know how to access the University, SHRS, and individual program rules and regulations.
- The Office of the Provost provides graduate students with specific resources related directly to their experience at the University of Pittsburgh. You can find this useful information at this link; University Regulations Governing Graduate Study.
- Students should review the most updated online version of the University Graduate catalog, SHRS Graduate handbook, and their program's policy information. (For catalog you must switch to the Graduate catalog in drop down)
- Students should be aware of and meet important academic deadlines, e.g., registration, add/drop and monitored withdrawal. See the Academic Calendar.

Communicating with SHRS Faculty and Staff

Students should stay in regular communication with their academic advisor and faculty members. To facilitate this, students are strongly encouraged to:
- Check their Pitt email regularly. (recommend at least 3 times a week)
- Inform their academic advisor, faculty, or department chair of difficulties that may impact their academic standing.
- Seek help as needed.
- Make and keep regular advising/registration appointments with their academic advisor.

Failure to communicate with faculty and staff, respond in a timely fashion to faculty and staff requests for communication, or attend required meetings can result in one of the actions stated below in the **SHRS Policy on Failure to Communicate.**

Financial Information

Tuition and Fee Rates

Tuition rates and mandatory fee rates are available on the SHRS Graduate Cost of Attendance page and the Online Graduate Cost of Attendance page on the University website.

Residency/Reduced Tuition

Students who reside in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania may be eligible for reduced tuition through state appropriations.

Eligibility is determined by criteria outlined in the University of Pittsburgh Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Reduced Tuition Rates, available online at: http://payments.pitt.edu/pa-tuition-rate-eligibility.

Additional Fees

Lab Fees: Lab courses may incur an additional fee to cover laboratory expenses. These fees will be charged to the students directly and will appear on the invoice generated by Student Accounts in addition to tuition and other fees each semester.

Financial Obligation of Students

The University of Pittsburgh has the right to withhold services if a student defaults on any financial obligation until repayment arrangements have been made that are satisfactory to the office or department to which the debt is owed.

Scholarships, Grants and Financial Aid

If you are interested in applying for loans, scholarships, grants, or work study, you should call, email or visit the University of Pittsburgh, Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. Click here for contact information.

The website specifically for graduate students is: Graduate School Financial Aid Instructions.

SHRS Scholarships and Awards

General information on scholarships and awards can be found here on our website. Contact individual departments for information on scholarships and awards specific to your area of study.

SHRS Academic Regulations

SHRS Guidelines on Academic Integrity Policy

Students have the responsibility to be honest and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies. Students have the right to be treated by faculty in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community (as well as those recognized within their profession). Should a student be accused of a breach of academic integrity or have questions regarding faculty responsibilities, procedural safeguards including provisions of due process have been designed to protect student rights. These may be found in the SHRS Guidelines on Academic Integrity.

Academic Integrity Modules

It is at the discretion of the Department Chair to require their students to complete the Academic Integrity modules. The modules can be accessed through Canvas and after the student has completed all three modules, they will be quizzed to test their knowledge and those who receive a score of 80% or greater on the quiz will receive an Acclaim badge that can be shared with their department or on LinkedIn.

The modules can be accessed through this link: https://canvas.pitt.edu/enroll/3LJA96. Below is a brief description of the modules.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity means adhering to ethical standards when submitting assignments or taking quizzes and exams. Whether taking classes in person or remotely, it is very important to submit only your own original work. This module provides a comprehensive description of what academic integrity is and provides links to University of Pittsburgh policies on academic integrity.

Plagiarism

In basic terms, plagiarism is taking the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. Sometimes this is done unintentionally by not citing information properly. In other instances, students will purposefully copy from others to complete an assignment quickly. In this section, you will learn how to identify plagiarism.

Paraphrasing

When you have to explain something that you just read, you need to paraphrase, or put the content in your own words. This section will help you understand the basics of paraphrasing.

Health Sciences Ombuds Office

The Health Sciences Ombuds Office provides students and postdoctoral trainees with an informal, confidential, neutral and independent resource to address concerns or questions openly, without fear of retaliation or judgment.

The ombudsperson for the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences is Jessica Maguire. To schedule an appointment please email jessica@ombud.pitt.edu .

Minimum Academic Standard

In addition to the University-wide regulations and standards detailed in the section on General Academic Regulations in the University Graduate Catalog, each student in SHRS is expected to be familiar with these school-specific regulations and academic Standards:

- It is the student's responsibility to review her/his academic standing, to identify graduate program requirements and prerequisites for intended graduate program(s), and to monitor their completion.
- All required and prerequisite coursework must be taken for a grade, when letter grade option is available, unless approved by the Department Chair/Program Director.
- Students must receive a grade of C or better in all courses required by their program curriculum.
- Students who receive a grade below a C in a required course must repeat that course and attain a grade of C or better to graduate. (Note: University regulations state that a student may repeat any course in which a grade of B- or lower is received if an authorization to repeat the course is given by the student's adviser/faculty.)
- All grades will remain on the transcript and be calculated into the GPA, unless or until a course repeat has been processed. After the repeat has been processed the credits will be removed, but the grade will remain on the transcript, although not factored into the GPA. A repeat flag will also be noted on the transcript.

- Students will not be permitted to register for a course until they attain a C or better in its prerequisites.
- Failure to receive an acceptable grade after the second opportunity to complete a required course may result in the student being dismissed from the program and SHRS.

Advising

Master and Clinical Doctorates

The director of the program to which the student has been accepted selects advisors for SHRS graduate students.

Doctor of Philosophy

PhD students are assigned an academic advisor in the student's main area of specialization. The academic advisor and student will plan course work and other experiences to enable the student to meet program requirements and their academic goals. More information for PhD students can be found in the PHD Student handbook

Change of Advisor

If either the student or their assigned advisor prefers, the student can choose another advisor. The student must obtain a *Change of Advisor* form, located on the Student Hub Forms page. Complete the form and secure the required signatures and return the form to the SHRS Registrar. As a general rule, students who have more than 50% of the credits required for graduation should not initiate change of advisor procedures.

Advisor Roles and Responsibilities

Initial Responsibilities of the Advisor
- Meet with each student advisee as soon as possible after admission to review program structure, policies, and procedures, degree requirements as noted in the (AAR) Academic Advisement Report and to assist in clarifying their educational goals

Ongoing Responsibilities of the Advisor
- Meet with student advisees **at least 1x per term**, prior to registration.
- Meet with student advisees who have been placed on academic probation to review the (AAR) Academic Advisement Report and provide resources and options for academic support. .
- Ensure that student advisees take the comprehensive examination (if required).
- Assist the student advisees in planning internships or research projects.
- Ensure that student advisees are aware of the processes and deadlines to apply for graduation. In the term before the expected graduation date, students will receive an email with directions and the deadline for completing the online application.
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- Students enrolled in online & hybrid and/or credit-bearing certificate programs will have a support coach available as a general point of contact, and/or to assist with any concerns they experience during their time in the program.

(AAR) Academic Advisement Report

AAR reports list all degree requirements, and as the student progresses through the program enrolling in courses and completing requirements, updated information directly populates into the report from PeopleSoft. Once a student has completed all the degree requirements the AAR will show as satisfied, indicating that your degree is complete. These reports will be used by the SHRS Registrar to certify students for graduation.

Instructions on pulling an AAR can be found on the [SHRS Student Resource Hub - Student AAR Guide](#)

Review Academic Progress

It is the student's responsibility to review their academic standing, to identify graduate program requirements and to monitor their completion.

Allowable Credits

Please refer to the [SHRS Graduate Catalog](#) for more information on Transfer Credits.

Credits Required

The number of credits required for the master's degree varies among the departments within SHRS, but all departments require at least 30 credits. All doctoral degrees awarded by SHRS require at least 72 credits, consistent with University of Pittsburgh regulations for graduate study. Many departments offer a variety of emphases. Individual departments should be contacted for the number of credits and AAR specific to that department and focus.

Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive Examinations are required for many graduate programs in SHRS. Successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination is needed for the student to demonstrate mastery of their field of graduate study. Each individual department/program will specify the content and procedure for the scheduling, administration, and grading of the Comprehensive Examination. Please refer to individual program descriptions or handbooks for details of Comprehensive Examinations for each program.

Enrollment

A student must be registered for at least one credit in a twelve (12) month period from the time of admission until the degree is granted in order to maintain active status. Those students who fail to observe this rule will be placed on inactive status and will have to seek formal readmission in order to continue in the program. If active status is not maintained, the student is not permitted to use University facilities or receive counseling or active supervision by a faculty member, advisor, or committee.

Active enrollment status in the term you are graduating:
- If the graduating student is funded under a GSA/GSR/TA/TF – Fall and/or Spring appointment, the student must continue to be enrolled either as full time (9 credits), SMSI (Summer Milestone Study), or FTDI (Full-Time Dissertation Status), even if they are graduating.

- If the graduating student is NOT a GSA/GSR/TA/TF, they defended their dissertation in the previous semester, and they are simply finishing their ETD requirements, they need NOT be enrolled provided they finish the ETD requirements prior to the add/drop period of the semester they are graduating in. Finishing ETD requirements is defined as the ETD being reviewed and approved by SHRS Academic Administrator Courtney Fleck <u>AND</u> all of the required paperwork is submitted to Courtney. If they do not complete the ETD requirements before the add/drop period, they will be required to enroll and may be subject to a late enrollment fee.

Graduate students registered for 9 to 15 credits in the Fall and Spring Terms are regarded as full-time students.

Students cannot enroll in courses that meet at the same time, without special permission from both instructors and their advisor.

Registering for Classes

After being admitted to a graduate program, your department administrator will contact you regarding enrollment for the upcoming term. Some students will enroll themselves through PeopleSoft during the designated enrollment days which are published in the Enrollment Calendar.https://www.registrar.pitt.edu/students/enrollment
If you need directions on how to enroll in PeopleSoft CX, please link to our enrollment directions on the University Registrar's website.

Holds

Resolve any holds that you may have on your account with the respective departments that have placed the holds, or they will prevent you from registering for your classes.

Maximum Number of Credits

Graduate students cannot enroll for more than (15) credits without the Dean's approval. Only SHRS Dean's office Student Services Office can enroll you after you receive approval for the additional credit(s). Students will be charged for each additional credit over the fulltime maximum of 15 on a per credit basis, or, over the flat rate limit, where applicable.

Permission Numbers

If a course requires consent to enroll, you are to email the instructor of the course for approval to enroll. Provide the name of the course, the subject code, and course number in your email.

If the course is an SHRS course, and the instructor approves of your enrollment, you will need to forward the instructor's consent to one of the following administrators for a permission number:
- Graduate Students - contact the Assistant Registrar.
- PhD Students - contact the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies.

If the course is not an SHRS course, you will need to receive a permission number from the school in which the course is offered.

Auditing a Course

Before submitting a request to Audit a course the student is required to meet with their advisor and the instructor to receive approval and to make sure the course can be offered as an audit. The course must be set up with a GLG (graduate letter grade) grading basis.

If the course is NOT an SHRS course, the student will need to contact the Dean's office for the school offering the course for their procedures and deadlines.

In order to audit any course, you **must enroll and pay tuition for the course**.
- You will receive an audit grade of (N). This is not counted toward graduation or the GPA.
- If the student is registered in a course with a GLG (graduate letter grade) grading basis, the grading option does not need to be changed because the N grade is built into GLG (this is only for graduate courses).
- **Up until the fourth week of the term the student can submit the** graduate [Audit Request Form](#) to the SHRS Registrar, after they and obtain the instructors signature as approval to audit the course.
- Upon submission, The SHRS Registrar will remind the instructor that they are to issue an N grade for an Audit grade for this student and a copy of this form will be kept in the student's record.

Add/Drop Process

Students can add or drop classes until the add/drop deadline. Add/drop during the summer sessions is dependent on the length of the class session. (See University [Academic Calendar](#) for specific dates.) The following is a typical add/drop process:

- Students should make an appointment with their advisor to discuss adding/dropping courses.
- Once approved by the advisor, students will make the enrollment changes online.

Problem with Enrollment After the Add/Drop Deadline

Should a student find an error in their enrollment after the add/drop period has ended, a formal memo is required from the student's advisor to the SHRS, Director of Student Services, Registrar. This memo will need to include the student's name, PeopleSoft number, the course(s) to be added or dropped (subject, name & section), the number of credits, and the reason for the error. If the error is the student's fault, the student may be charged a late fee at the discretion of the main University of Pittsburgh Registrar. If the fault is with the Department the student is enrolled in, that Department Chair can provide an account number to cover the late fee.

Upon approval from the SHRS Director of Student Services, Registrar, the memo will be submitted to the University of Pittsburgh Registrar to process the exception.

Monitored Withdrawal

After the add/drop period has ended, students may withdraw from a course that they no longer wish to attend by completing a Monitored Withdrawal Request form in the office of the school offering the course. Students must process the Monitored Withdrawal Request form within the first nine weeks of the term in the fall and spring. Because summer sessions vary in length, students should check the University's academic calendars for those deadlines.

Students should check with the school offering the course for the last day to submit a Monitored Withdrawal Request form. The grade W will appear on the student's grade report and transcript. There is no financial adjustment to student's tuition or fee obligations involved in withdrawing from courses, but withdrawing may jeopardize satisfactory academic progress, financial aid, and assistantships or fellowships.

For SHRS, **the form must be signed by the instructor of the course** and emailed to the SHRS Director of Student Services, Registrar, within the **first nine weeks of the term** in the fall and spring. Monitored Withdrawal forms can be found on the SHRS Student Resource Hub: Monitored Withdrawal Request.

Repeating Courses

Consult your department or the SHRS Director of Student Services, Registrar for the proper procedure of repeating a class and for information on how this will affect your grades and the calculation of your Grade Point Average (GPA). When you repeat a class, **you must officially enroll and pay for the class again**. University policy prohibits any student from attending a class without being officially enrolled for that class. A repeated course has a notation appearing underneath the previous course taken designating that it is excluded from the GPA. The original course and grade will always remain on your record/transcript.

SHRS Graduate Students are only permitted to repeat a course <u>one additional time after the initial attempt</u>.

Any grade earned in the repeated course will be posted to the academic record even if it is lower than the original grade.

The repeated course must be the same in which the original grade was earned. In extenuating circumstances, a department chairman, with the dean's approval, may substitute another course of similar content.

Incomplete grades (G or I) will not be identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.

Students seeking to repeat other non-SHRS (prerequisites, electives, etc.) courses will be permitted to do so at the discretion of the program director.

A student may repeat any course, except as noted below.

- No sequence course may be repeated for credit after a higher numbered course in that sequence has been passed with a C or higher grade. This also pertains to graduate and first professional students who have passed with a B or higher grade.

- No course may be repeated at any other institution and have that grade accepted as a replacement for the original grade earned at the University of Pittsburgh. The grade earned by repeating a course is used in lieu of the grade originally earned.

The following calculations apply to all students at the University of Pittsburgh:

- The original course and grade remain on the transcript and/or the academic record, however, the grade and credits originally earned are not counted in the calculation of the QPA (prior to Fall term 2005) or the GPA.
- The repeated course does not increase the number of credits counted toward meeting the degree requirements unless an F is replaced by a passing grade.

W, R, N, or NC grades reported for the repeated course will not be identified as a course repeat, thus the original grade earned will continue to be counted in the QPA (prior to Fall term 2005) or GPA. Incomplete grades (G or I) will not be identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.

Grading Information and Policies

All SHRS graduate programs adhere to the University's grading system and grading policies for graduate students. Please refer to the Graduate University Catalog for Academic Regulations for Grading and Records

Course Grading

The method of evaluation and grading is the prerogative of the course instructor and is based on the course objectives and expectations. SHRS faculty have the option of issuing "+" or "-" grades. SHRS faculty have the option of assigning letter grades or H/S/U evaluations, as printed in the course catalog, and determined at student's enrollment. Students will be appraised of the evaluation procedure by the instructor at the beginning of each course. It is the student's responsibility to request clarification of any evaluation or grading policy.

Grade Appeal Process

Students may appeal grades if they feel they have been assigned incorrectly or improperly. A description of the SHRS Grade Appeal Process can be found on the SHRS Student Resource Hub .

G Grade Policy

Students assigned G grades due to *unfinished course work because of extenuating personal circumstances* are required to complete course requirements *no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken*. Once the deadline has passed, the G grade will be changed to a "NG" no-grade on the transcript and the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation. Students will not be permitted to register for courses in which a G grade was assigned to a prerequisite course unless prior approval has been obtained by the Department/Program Chair, or designee.

SHRS G Grade Policy

A SHRS Completion Agreement of G Grade must be completed by the instructor and the student if the G grade is not changed by the add/drop deadline for the next term.

The instructor will receive an email from Power Apps after the add/drop deadline for the next term has passed to complete an online G grade form. The instructor will provide objectives and date of completion. Once the instructor completes their portion the student will receive an email to review the objectives and completion date and approve.

Once the grade is submitted, the form will be completed by the SHRS Registrar and copy of the form will be placed in the student's file.

Student Services will follow up on any G grades that are not changed by the expected date of completion.

I Grade Policy

The I grade indicates work in the course for which it is assigned has **not been completed due to the nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars**. It is to be assigned only to students who have been doing the regular work of the course but who need more time than the term allows to complete the course work.

SHRS (Incomplete) I Grade Policy

All incomplete grades are expected **to be completed by no later than the <u>end of the next consecutive semester</u>**.

A SHRS Completion Agreement of I (incomplete) Grade must be completed by the instructor and the student if the I grade is not changed by the add/drop deadline for the next term.

The instructor will receive an email from Power Apps after the add/drop deadline for the next term has passed to complete an online I grade form. The instructor will provide objectives and date of completion. Once the instructor completes their portion the student will receive an email to review the objectives and completion date and approve.

Once the grade is submitted, the form will be completed by the SHRS Registrar and copy of the form will be placed in the student's file

Student Services will follow up on any G grades that are not changed by the expected date of completion.

S/NC Grade Option (Formerly the S/N Option)

Prerequisite and required courses must be taken for a letter grade when available, and a student must earn a B or better.

Certain courses are offered on the S/NC (Satisfactory/No-Credit) grade option. This option was designed to encourage students to explore new and potentially difficult subjects without fear of the risks of failure. Under this option, a student who does satisfactory work

(a grade of B or better) in a course receives the grade of S. If the student's work is not satisfactory (a grade of B- or lower), the grade of NC (No Credit) is given. Courses for which an S is received are counted toward graduation but are not computed in the GPA. Courses in which an NC is received are counted toward neither graduation nor the GPA.

Statute of Limitations on Allowable Coursework

The purpose of the statute of limitations is to ensure that a graduate degree from the University of Pittsburgh represents mastery of current knowledge in the field of study. All requirements for MA and MS degrees must be completed within a period of **four consecutive calendar years from the student's initial registration for graduate study**; **all professional masters within five years (includes both full time and part time students).** Dual degrees and joint degrees that require course work in excess of 50 credit hours may be granted a longer statute of limitations by the University Council on Graduate Study.

PHD/Doctoral:

From the student's initial registration for graduate study, all requirements for the PhD degree must be completed **within a period of 10 years or within eight years if the student has received transfer credits.** A student who is unable to complete all degree requirements within a five-year period after passing the comprehensive examination may be re-examined at the discretion of the department or school. Programs for professional doctoral degrees, for which many candidates pursue part-time study while working full-time within their chosen disciplines, may be granted a longer statute of limitations by the schools offering the degrees.

Extension:

Under exceptional circumstances, a candidate for an advanced degree may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. The request must be approved by the department or departmental committee (master's or doctoral) and submitted to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for final action. Requests for an extension of the statute of limitations must be accompanied by a departmental assessment of the work required of the student to complete the degree as well as documented evidence of the extenuating circumstances leading to the requested extension. Students who request an extension of the statute of limitations must demonstrate proper preparation for the completion of all current degree requirements.

Resigning from the University for a Specific Term

If you are considering resigning for the term (academic withdrawal from all of your classes), please discuss your situation with your academic advisor, a [Financial Aid](#) counselor, and the [Student Payment Center](#) to be certain you understand all of your options and obligations.

The effective date of your resignation determines if you are eligible for an adjustment in the tuition and fees you were charged for the term. The effective date of your resignation will normally be the date you notify the University by one of the methods described below. You are responsible for satisfying all financial obligations accumulated until the time you officially resign. The timing of your resignation also has an impact on how grades are

recorded on your transcript. The last day to resign from a term is when sixty percent of the term has passed.

For more information regarding Resignation, please refer to policies [AC 67 Termination of Registration](#) and Title IV Refunds.

Please visit the Student Payment center [Tuition Adjustments page](#) on the University of Pittsburgh website for more information.

SHRS Policy on Failure to Communicate

Failure to Communicate definition - not responding to three (3) requests for communication from faculty or staff or failure to attend two (2) required meetings with faculty or staff. This applies to students who are enrolled or have not enrolled in a required term by the add/drop deadline.

If a student fails to communicate, the SHRS Registrar will email the student to determine the following:

- Are there extenuating circumstances that are prohibiting the student from enrolling, attending classes or communicating with faculty and staff associated with their program? If so, the student will need to discuss their situation with the SHRS Registrar or SHRS Ombudsperson ASAP to determine options.
- Does the student need to request a Leave of Absence? If so, the student needs to request the LOA using this link: [SHRS - Leave of Absence Request](#).
- Does the student wish to resign from (permanently leave) the program? If so, the student will need to provide the SHRS Registrar with an email stating that they wish to do so for their student record.

A response is required from the student within 2 weeks of the date the email was sent. If a student fails to respond by the date required, they will be discontinued from the program. Students may contact their program director to request readmission, however it is not guaranteed.

Grading determination if the student is enrolled in the term:

- If there are extenuating circumstances, the student will be given a G grade and granted up to 1 year to complete the work.
- If there are NO extenuating circumstances, the student will be assigned either:
- an incomplete (I) grade (graduate students ONLY), which grants them to the end of the next term to complete the required work

OR

- the grade earned in the course which may be a failing grade. If the course is a required course for degree completion, the student will need to repeat the course. Grades will be assigned based on performance in the course, including failing grades for missed assignments, at the instructor's discretion.

Leave of Absence

Under special conditions, graduate students may be granted **one** leave of absence. A **maximum leave of two years may be granted to doctoral students or one year to master's students.** If the degree requires summer enrollment, and you will not be enrolling, you must submit for a LOA.

Students can request a leave of absence by clicking on this link: SHRS - Leave of Absence Request Link and then selecting Graduate student new LOA Request.   Once submitted your request will be forwarded to the advisor selected, then to the Associate Dean for Graduate studies and then to the SHRS Registrar for completion.

All questions regarding a LOA should be directed to Kellie Beach, Director of Student Services, SHRS Registrar at kbeach@pitt.edu

Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy

Graduate students who have completed at least 9 credits and whose cumulative GPA falls below 3,000 will be placed on academic probation and/or suspension and will receive written notification of this status. At this point it is the student's responsibility to meet with his or her advisor.

To be removed from academic probation, the student will need to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.000 within their next two terms of enrollment. Failure to do so may subject the student to recommendation for immediate dismissal from the program by the Department Chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

Students who fail to demonstrate progress toward meeting graduation requirements in a timely manner may be placed on academic probation or recommended for dismissal from the program by the Department Chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. SHRS reserves the right to terminate a student at any time for academic or other reasons.

Dismissal from the program is at the discretion of the SHRS Dean. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event it is not mathematically possible for a student to remediate their cumulative program GPA within their next two terms of enrollment, the student may be immediately dismissed.

A student may appeal their dismissal with the University of Pittsburgh Provost office.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement is not guaranteed. Students who have been discontinued or who have not enrolled at SHRS for three consecutive terms must request reinstatement by contacting their program director.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements for a Graduate degree from SHRS are as follows:
- Student must be considered an "active student" at time of graduation; they must have been registered for at least one credit at the University of Pittsburgh within the last three terms or sessions.
  - If the graduating student is funded under a GSA/GSR/TA/TF – Fall and/or Spring appointment, the student must continue to be enrolled either as full time (9 credits) or FTDI, even if they are graduating.

- o If the graduating student is NOT a GSA/GSR/TA/TF, they defended their dissertation in the previous semester, and they are simply finishing their ETD requirements, they need NOT be enrolled provided they finish the ETD requirements prior to the add/drop period of the semester they are graduating in. Finishing ETD requirements is defined as the ETD being reviewed and approved by Courtney Fleck AND all of the required paperwork is submitted to Courtney." If they do not complete the ETD requirements before the add/drop period, they will be required to enroll and may be subject to a late enrollment fee.
- If you are a PhD or Master of Science student that needs to complete an **ETD (Electronic Thesis/Dissertation)** as part of your graduation requirements, you MUST contact Courtney Fleck at courtney.fleck@pitt.edu in the term PRIOR to your graduating term to receive the instructions and deadlines to complete your ETD. **NO EXCEPTIONS** will be made if you do not meet the deadlines for the term in which you are graduating. **Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the student being denied graduation by the SHRS registrar**.
- Students may **not** enroll in courses outside the University of Pittsburgh in the semester they are graduating.
- Satisfactory completion of required credits.
- Minimum cumulative GPA 3.000.
- The GPA will be calculated as a composite of all courses taken at the University of Pittsburgh and counting toward completion of the degree.
- Completion of all requirements for the program in which the student has enrolled.
- No outstanding D, F, G or I grade in a required course.
- Updated and approved Plan of Study on file in Student Services.
- An **application for graduation** must be submitted online through PeopleSoft, based on the deadlines determined for that term. Email notification of these deadlines will be sent to students in the prior term.

A student with outstanding financial obligations to the University is not eligible to receive the diploma, official academic transcripts, or any certification of completion of the academic program.

Thesis and Non-Thesis Options for Degree Completion

Many graduate programs allow or require students to complete a culminating project as part of completing their degree. PhD programs require students to propose, complete, and defend a dissertation, and Master of Science programs may also allow or require students to propose, complete, and defend a thesis to complete their degree. Some other masters programs may allow a scholarly paper or other non-thesis options to serve as this culminating project. Students should refer to their program handbook for specific guidelines and requirements for completing the thesis, dissertation, scholarly paper, or non-thesis option, including formal procedures, proposals, committees and defenses, the minimum number of thesis or other credits required, and other required courses. Students completing a thesis should refer to the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) sections below.

Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (ETD) Approval form

All members of the thesis committee must sign off as approving the final thesis manuscript using the ProQuest ETD [Administrator](). This form should be approved and signed **based on the content and not the formatting of the ETD**. The thesis committee Advisor/Chair submits the grade, using the Satisfactory or No Credit (S/NC) option. With the unanimous approval of the committee, the student will be eligible to receive the M.S. degree.

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Guidelines

A student that is completing a thesis will need to complete an ETD as part of the graduation requirements. Students must attend an in-person or virtual information session in their final semester. They will be notified by Courtney Fleck at courtney.fleck@pitt.edu, the Assistant Director of Graduate Studies regarding the virtual information session. Other information on ETD deadlines can be found here: [Doctoral Dissertation & Master's Thesis | University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences]()

Workshops and ETD support can be found here https://etd.pitt.edu/help. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these training sessions as early as possible and before beginning to write the thesis online.

Completed (ETD) must be submitted in electronic format to ProQuest ETD Administrator. Students preparing a dissertation should visit the (ETD) website at https://etd.pitt.edu/. Courtney's role in the ETD process is to review your ETD to make sure that it meets the ETD format guidelines specified by the University. The student will upload the ETD through the ProQuest ETD Administrator site for review, and Courtney will send the student and thesis advisor a detailed email, through the ETD administrator on what items need to be corrected. After corrections are made the student will upload again to the ProQuest ETD Administrator and this review process will continue back and forth until Courtney has approved that all revisions have been made. All revisions and the ETD paperwork will have to be completed by the defense deadlines set by SHRS in the term the student is graduating to be certified for graduation. **There will be no exceptions to these deadlines**.

Deadlines are posted at least a term prior on the SHRS Student Resources SharePoint .https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/doctoral-defense-masters-thesisIn some cases, the student is encouraged to publish the thesis and/or present it at a national or state professional meeting. If the thesis is published in a professional journal, it is recommended that the thesis committee chair be listed as coauthor.

Internships and Clinical Education

Most graduate programs in SHRS incorporate internships and clinical education experiences. Students should contact their departments regarding internship experiences and clinical education experiences and procedures.

Independent Study

Many graduate programs in SHRS permit students to register for independent studies. These courses provide an opportunity for the student to complete an intense, self-designed project with faculty supervision in an area of special interest. Students should refer to their program handbooks and contact their departments regarding registration and expectations

for independent studies.

Miscellaneous Information

Change of Name/Address/Social Security

Students are required to keep their contact information up to date with SHRS. Students have the ability to change their addresses or telephone numbers via the Student Services Community. More information on changing personal information can be found on Personal Information | Office of the University Registrar | University of Pittsburgh.

Graduate and Professional Student Association

The SHRS Dean's Student Advisor Board (SAB) is a member of the **Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)** of the University of Pittsburgh. All full- time and part-time graduate students of SHRS who have active status, as defined by the school, and who are in good standing, as defined by the University, are members of the SHRS GPSG. Further information on becoming active in this organization can be obtained by sending an email to: shrssab@groups.pitt.edu.

Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)

A Graduate & Professional Student Government Organization - The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) is the student government for all graduate and professional students at the University of Pittsburgh. The GPSG administers half of the graduate student activity fee to provide services and event programming to all graduate and professional students.
GPSG connects students to Pitt administrators through graduate student representation on many University committees. Please feel free to contact the GPSG with any issues or concerns.

Graduate and professional students can also get involved with the GPSG by attending our monthly assembly meetings or visiting the GPSG office in William Pitt Union. Please see the calendar for times and locations.

GPSG connects students to Pitt administrators through graduate student representation on many University committees. Please feel free to contact the GPSG with any issues or concerns.

Website: https://www.pittgpsg.com/
Office location: 825 William Pitt Union
Email: gpsg@pitt.edu

SHRS Student Organizations

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences has several student organizations based on academic programs for graduate students. You can find a list of these organizations along with a description of each by going to Pitt SHRS Student Organizations.

Office of Institutional Engagement & Wellbeing

This office provides leadership and resources, and partners with units and campuses to create welcoming environments that enable everyone to succeed.

[Office of Institutional Engagement and Wellbeing](#)
University of Pittsburgh
Office of Institutional Engagement & Wellbeing
18th Floor, Cathedral of Learning
4200 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-648-7860

Disability Resources and Services

At the University of Pittsburgh, we are committed to promoting equal access to students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. Disability is an important aspect of our community.

[Get Started with DRS](#)

Disability Resources & Services
140 William Pitt Union
3959 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
drsrecep@pitt.edu
412-648-7890

Veterans Benefits

Veterans and dependents of disabled or deceased veterans may be eligible for benefits according to federal administration guidelines.

[Office of Veterans Services](#)

Office of Veterans Services
1440 Wesley W. Posvar Hall
230 South Bouquet St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
veterans@pitt.edu
412-624-3213 /

For additional information on Veterans Education Benefits, visit www.gibill.va.gov.

International Students

All international students should refer to the University's Office of International Services (OIS) website at [Office of International Services](#) for information on admissions, orientation, immigration and visas, and life in Pittsburgh.

Student Technology Resources

Health Sciences Information Technology is the point of contact for IT solutions for SHRS. Services provided include support for students, faculty and staff in the areas of academic computing, administrative systems, development services and support solutions.

Health Sciences IT can be contacted at help@hs.pitt.edu.

Please reference the IT Resources for Pitt Students | Information Technology | University of Pittsburgh page for detail regarding Student Technical Services.
All SHRS classrooms and conference rooms include a computer, laptop hookup, room display, and network access.